



***eNews from Sen. Lisa Murkowski - Vol. 2, Issue 3 : : [Visit Senator Murkowski's Web Site](#)***  
***March 17, 2006 - Happy St. Patrick's Day***

### **Alaskans Lend a Hand to Louisiana Fishermen**

All of us who witnessed, from afar, the devastation that occurred in the Gulf Coast region from the hurricanes were motivated to help. Within days of Hurricane Katrina, I joined representatives of the fishing, processing, financial, transportation and logistics sectors of the Alaska fishing industry to help form the Alaska Fishing Industry Relief Mission (AFIRM). The group exists solely to help Gulf Coast fishing communities resume operations as quickly as possible.

Alaska's efforts are paying off for the people of Louisiana. On Monday, March 13, I traveled to Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana to speak at a ceremony to dedicate the arrival and installation of a 16-ton marine travel lift generously donated by the City of Valdez. Federal, state and local governments have been hauling boats out of bayous, backyards and parking lots and stockpiling them on dry land. But there has been no way to put the boats back into the water. The boatyard lost its launching equipment in the storms, and new equipment could not be obtained quickly. The travel lift, which served the City of Valdez for years, is capable of lifting a 60-ton fishing boat and replacing it gently in the water.

"Hundreds of fishing boats were forced onto dry land or sunk by the powerful hurricanes," Plaquemines Parish President Benny Rousselle explained. "We've experienced great devastation. Out of all the economic sectors affected, the commercial fishing community has been the hardest hit. Many of these fishermen have nothing left but their boats. The value of this donation is beyond words."

I was joined by Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, who said, "The people of Louisiana are grateful to Senator Murkowski and all our friends in Alaska who have given us so much more than a travel lift for our fisheries. They have also given us the comfort of knowing we are not alone in our rebuilding efforts following the greatest disaster in our nation's history. I look forward to working with all my colleagues in the Senate to provide new tools and initiatives as we rebuild Louisiana and the entire Gulf Coast together."

I thank all of you who were part of this massive effort, and to all Alaskans who were motivated to help in any way they could. I hope you know how much your generosity is appreciated.



***Senator Murkowski and Senator Mary Landrieu were on-hand to watch the marine lift launch its first boat, the Pat-Al, in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana***

### **2006 Iditarod**

Congratulations to Alaskan Jeff King, the 2006 Iditarod Champion. This year's race provided an exciting contest from start to finish.

I also send my thoughts and prayers to Susan Butcher, the four-time Iditarod Champion who was diagnosed with leukemia in December. For updates on her progress, and to learn how you can help visit [www.susanbutcher.com](http://www.susanbutcher.com)

### **Legislation to Open ANWR Passes the Senate**

Last night, the United States Senate took the first step toward opening the Arctic Coastal Plain for oil and gas exploration and development by approving the FY07 Budget Resolution in a vote of 51-49. This legislation includes language instructing the Senate Energy Committee to raise \$3 billion, which could result in opening the Coastal Plain to development later this spring.

This is a critical first step toward victory for Alaska. Senator Stevens and I know we still have a few hurdles to clear, and we are committed to seeing this through to the end. Before ANWR can be opened, the House of Representatives must also pass the Budget Resolution. An additional Budget Reconciliation measure containing the ANWR language must then be approved by both the Senate and the House and signed by the President. We anticipate working on Reconciliation language in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in May.

### **Anti-Meth Legislation Passes Congress**

I am pleased to report that anti-methamphetamine provisions were included in the final version of the Patriot Act. As many of you know, meth use is unfortunately becoming widespread in Alaska. In 2004 alone, there were 66 meth labs that were discovered and shut down in the state. This extremely dangerous drug poses a health and safety risk in communities and neighborhoods across the state. The Patriot Act reauthorization included the most comprehensive anti-meth package ever introduced in Congress. It will give law enforcement agencies new tools to find, arrest, and prosecute criminals who produce and traffic meth. While it is a major step forward, I realize that we also need to continue to work together in Congress to find ways to prevent meth abuse and provide treatment for those who are addicted.

### **Great Living Alaskan**

As I noted in the last edition of the eNews, I would like to use this publication to highlight Alaskans who volunteer their time and skills to make our state a wonderful place to live. The first "Great Living Alaskan" is a young man I met in Fairbanks last month, the Alaska State Youth of the Year - Manuel Dunham. I was impressed with his maturity and ambition, and I know that he has a bright future ahead. The Fairbanks Boys and Girls Club provided the following bio:

**Manuel Dunham**  
**Alaska State Youth of the Year 2005**

Manuel Dunham grew up as a middle child in a family of ten children. His parents separated when he was younger and he decided to live in Fairbanks with his mother after experiencing abuse from his father while in California. He knew living with his mother and half of his nine siblings meant that he was going to have to step up as the man of the family through hard work and being a positive role model for his younger siblings.

Manuel came to the Fairbanks Boys and Girls Club eight years ago because he was hungry for food and the Club provided a snack every afternoon. He was able to satisfy his hunger in many other ways, too. He found his passion and talent for boxing while at the Club and has gone on to succeed competitively in amateur tournaments. His love for music was embraced at the Club where he was able to make music during Music Tech, play the drums in the band room, emcee Member Showcases, and freestyle rap with other members. Today, Manuel is working part-time as a local deejay performing at events aimed at keeping youth off the streets. Manuel's grades went from an 'F' to 'B' average with the help of the Club's Power Hour program and staff. Aside from academics, Manuel has also excelled in sports, such as football and basketball, while at school and the Club. He also discovered the importance of giving back to the community while at the Club. Manuel has volunteered at the Club and has volunteered at other places in the community, such as the YMCA. Manuel has also been an active member of Keystone Club and has proven a wonderful role model for other members to look up to.

Manuel has grown into a talented, ambitious individual with much promise for his future. He is a national amateur boxing champion, a leader in the community, a hard worker, and talented musician who has taken his life's situations and turned them into motivation to succeed. "I believe that everyone has choices in his life that he is ultimately responsible for making," says Manuel. "I had to choose between living a life of misdirection or going to the Boys and Girls Club for guidance after school." Manuel chose to come to the Club and now he is planning to pursue a degree in business and/or journalism after he receives his high school diploma, this December.



***Senator Murkowski talks with Manuel Dunham at Fairbanks event in February***

If you know of an Alaskan, young or old, who deserves recognition for exceptional work, please contact my office and share his or her story at: [greatalaskan@murkowski.senate.gov](mailto:greatalaskan@murkowski.senate.gov)

### **Coffee With the Senator**

We have had great success so far with our constituent coffee meetings. If you are planning to visit Washington, D.C., and will be in town on a Thursday, [click here](#) to see if I am hosting a constituent coffee. I enjoy the opportunity to meet with fellow Alaskans and discuss the issues important to them and their families. The constituent coffee meetings allow you the opportunity to visit with me, take a photo and meet other Alaskans in town.



***Arne Tveit, from Kodiak, was very pleased to meet Senator Murkowski at last week's coffee. He talked about Special Olympics, and what it has meant to him and other athletes in Alaska.***



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